



The Partner Connection

The Newsletter of DCA

April 2014

We've Given DCA.GA.GOV a New Look

As part of an ongoing process of upgrades, our DCA team has given a new look to our website to be a reflection of who we are, as well as a reflection of Georgia. Changes in usability and content are coming, but for now most features remain the same. In perhaps the most prominent content change on the home page, you will now find the programs in the former "Sustainable Growth" category under the "Community Development" heading. "Housing" and "Economic Development" remain the same.

We will continue to seek ways to enhance the site and help our stakeholders access our vast resources.

Deputy Commissioner Carmen Chubb Recognized for Lifetime Achievement

NEWS AND EVENTS

Commissioner Corbin and Board Member Carolyn Crayton Celebrate in Macon



L-R: Commissioner Gretchen Corbin, Keep Macon-Bibb Beautiful Executive Director Pam Carswell, DCA Board Member Carolyn Crayton, Keep America Beautiful President and CEO Jennifer Jehn.

At the **Keep Macon-Bibb Beautiful** annual awards luncheon in March, Commissioner Gretchen Corbin congratulated the organization's many volunteers. DCA Board member and long-time Macon community champion Carolyn Crayton helped start Keep Macon-Bibb Beautiful in the 1970s, setting in motion forty years (and counting) of work by thousands of volunteers across Georgia to create awareness for litter prevention, recycling education, community gardening, beautifying parks and public spaces and much more.

"Georgia was among the first three states in the country to implement a community beautification program," said Commissioner Corbin. "Thanks to Carolyn Crayton and a hard-working group of volunteers...it all started here in Macon and now Keep Georgia Beautiful is the nation's largest affiliate of Keep



Carmen Chubb, Deputy Commissioner for Housing, was awarded the prestigious SMITH's Lifetime Achievement Award in March. The award is given each year at SMITH's Affordable Housing Finance Conference to honor the recipient's body of work. SMITH's Affordable Housing Finance Award was introduced in 2004 to provide recognition to an individual who has made a lasting impact on the affordable housing finance market.

Smith's Research and Gradings is a nationally-recognized research company, providing independent research and third-party analysis for institutional investors. SMITH's Conference series provide unique forums for investors and issuers to discuss matters of mutual interest. They include SMITH's Affordable Housing Finance Conference, State and Local Government Finance Conference, and Community-Based Healthcare Conference.

PlanFirst Applications Due May 15

Finalize your PlanFirst applications now! This new program will reward communities that demonstrate an established pattern of implementing their local Comprehensive Plans. Communities of all sizes may apply, and should show:

America Beautiful."

April is Fair Housing Month

Georgians who are searching online for fair housing information now have a faster, more direct way to find it. The Department of Community Affairs has established a new web address to access housing information: www.fairhousinggeorgia.com. The site will continue to provide detailed information on the rights of every citizen to access housing, as well as links to Georgia's laws and federal laws. In addition, the site provides information on what to do if a person feels he or she has been denied access to housing.

"We know that our entire state and economy benefit from equal access," said Commissioner Gretchen Corbin. "Georgia is home to nearly 11 million people, and we want to make sure that every family, and every individual is able to make the best choices possible about where they live. Our department is a proud advocate for housing opportunities, and we are making sure that we're helping people learn about their housing rights."

In addition, DCA will host a **FREE Fair Housing Accessibility Training** on June 3 at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth. Held in cooperation with GSFIC - State ADA Coordinator's Office, Metro Fair Housing Services Inc., the Office of Insurance & Safety Fire Commissioner - State Fire Marshal, the Statewide Independent Living Council and the SOPOS Coalition, this workshop will examine compliance with the Fair Housing Act design and construction requirements. The program offers comprehensive and detailed instruction, useful online web resources, and a toll-free information line for technical guidance.

For more information and to register, contact John Ritzu at jritzu@lcmarchitects.com or (312) 913-1717 x 228.

Office of Downtown Development Coordinates Assistance to Cities

Since February, three Georgia Main Street cities have been struck by fires in their downtowns: Clarkesville, Dahlonega and Carrollton. Each fire was different in severity and impact on the downtowns, and staff from the Department of Community Affairs has worked with each city to help the local governments and the affected property owners, business owners, and employees.

"These are the times our customers need us the most," said Commissioner Gretchen Corbin. "We have been able to assemble assistance teams to help these communities and individuals meet their needs as immediately as possible. We plan to be available over the long term as these cities and property owners consider their rebuilding options."

Staff from the Office of Downtown Development have acted as liaisons among the cities, resources available through DCA, and other state agencies that will provide assistance. Less than two weeks after the fire in Clarkesville, staff had assembled a

- A history of public involvement with development of the plan
- Active engagement in plan implementation
- Proven progress with achieving the community's stated vision or goals

PLEASE NOTE: An article in the February DCA newsletter about PlanFirst contained an error. None of the referenced Housing incentives, including QAP incentives and bonus points for CHIP applications, apply to the PlanFirst program. For questions, please contact Jim Frederick at 404-679-3105 or jim.frederick@dca.ga.gov.

2014 applications are due May 15. Applications are available on the [PlanFirst webpage](#). Contact Adriane Wood at adriane.wood@dca.ga.gov for more information.

Appalachian Regional Commission



Michael Harden is DCA's new State Program Manager for Georgia's **Appalachian Regional Commission** (ARC). The ARC provides financial and technical assistance to 37 counties in Georgia for community and economic development activities.

Contact Michael at michael.harden@dca.ga.gov.

CDBG Update

Georgia's **Community Development Block Grant** (CDBG) Annual Competition applications are now complete and under review at DCA. In all, 123 communities across Georgia completed

resource team to meet with city officials, business owners and property owners. In addition to DCA's resources (which included the design studio, the State Small Business Credit Initiative, the Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund, HomeSafe Georgia, and staff from Regional Services, additional public and private resources included:

- UGA's Small Business Development Center
- Carl Vinson Institute of Government at UGA
- Georgia Mountains Regional Commission
- Ninth District Opportunity (a Community Action Agency that works in partnership with low income people and promotes equal access to opportunities)
- ServPro (a local franchise of a national company providing fire and water damage cleanup)
- Local banks
- Habersham County Development Authority

"Not only do we plan to work with these communities as long as they need assistance, we plan to learn from these events as well," said Deputy Commissioner for Economic Development Brian Williamson. "We're working now on a checklist of issues communities should consider when facing a catastrophic event, whether natural or man-made. Our goal is to help Georgia's communities restore their economies as quickly as possible after difficult circumstances."

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



Homeowners who became unemployed or underemployed within the last 36 months may be eligible for temporary mortgage payment assistance; and homeowners who have experienced other financial hardships within the last 36 months, including those associated with military service, death of a spouse, or medical hardships, may be eligible for HomeSafe Georgia assistance. We encourage potentially eligible homeowners to attend one of these events, at which DCA staff will partner with Department of Labor (DOL) and other agencies to provide information and answer questions:

April 24: Atlanta Diversity Veteran & Professional Career Fair; 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Cobb Galleria Centre, Atlanta

April 26: Financial and Home buyers Workshop; 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Springfield Baptist, Conyers

May 6: DOL & Army Career & Alumni Program Job Fair 2014; 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.; U.S. Army Reserve Center, Building 14401, Fort Gordon

May 22: ACAP/ACS Spring Career Fair; 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Club Stewart, Fort Stewart

grant applications that totaled more than \$59 million in proposed community improvements. Commissioner Corbin will announce funded projects in August 2014.

Equal Access Training



DCA Housing staff attended a Fair Housing workshop in Macon designed to help increase access to affordable housing options to eligible Georgians. L-R: Cassandra Knight, Brenda Currie, Brandie Garner, Susan Price, Carmen Chubb, Nancy Dove, Antonette Sewell, Brenda Zachery, Linda Driver and Brian Connor.



4.625%

Georgia Dream First Mortgage
FHA/VA/RD/Conventional Uninsured
with a
Georgia Dream Down Payment Loan

The [Georgia Dream website](#) provides complete information.

Follow us on **twitter**

May 30: Robins AFB Civilian Personnel Services Job Fair;
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.; Heritage Club, Robins AFB

For more information: www.homesafegeorgia.com

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCING

March Financial Awards

Region Three

Atlanta Development Authority, DBA Invest Atlanta

- \$750,000 in Regional Economic Business Assistance (REBA) funds
- Creates 500 jobs
- Spurs an additional \$10.4 million in private investment
- Spurs an additional \$150,000 in public (non-DCA) investment
- Assists in the location of athenahealth, Inc., an IT facility, in Atlanta

Region Four

City of West Point

- \$353,000 in Employment Incentive Program (EIP) funds
- \$300,000 in OneGeorgia Equity funds
- Creates 300 jobs
- Spurs an additional \$35 million in private investment
- Spurs an additional \$1.02 million in public (non-DCA) investment
- Assists with the construction of a public water system and improvements to serve Hyundai Dymos Georgia LLC's new facility location

Region Five

Development Authority of Jasper County

- \$50,000 in OneGeorgia EDGE funds
- Creates 42 jobs
- Spurs an additional \$12 million in private investment
- Spurs an additional \$122,000 in public (non-DCA) investment
- Assists with the location of Norton Packaging, Inc.

Region Seven

City of Waynesboro

- \$250,000 in EIP funds
- Creates 25 jobs
- Spurs an additional \$4.8 million in private investment
- Spurs an additional \$15,000 in public (non-DCA)



The Georgia Main Street Program is on Facebook! Like us and see what's happening in downtowns from Blairsville to Brunswick.



[Previous issues of The Partner Connection](#)



investment

- Assists with the construction of public road, water and sewer system improvements to serve the new Hampton Inn to be constructed by Shree Gurudev Dutt, LLC

Region Eight

City of Marshallville

- \$70,800 in Immediate Threat and Danger (ITD) funds
- Spurs an additional \$69,000 in public (non-DCA) investment
- Assists 1,096 citizens
- Assists the city in rehabilitating its water treatment plant

Development Authority of Columbus

- \$350,000 in OneGeorgia EDGE funds
- Will create 400 jobs
- Spurs an additional \$18 million in private investment
- Assists in the location of a Hostess Brands baking facility

Region Twelve

City of Hiltonia

- \$12,500 in ITD funds
- Spurs an additional \$34,500 in public (non-DCA) investment
- Assists 342 citizens
- Assists in making repairs to the city's water system

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